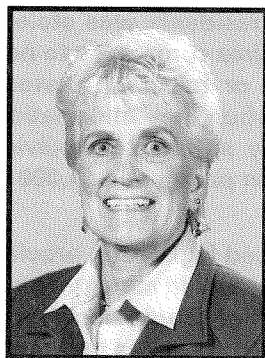


Hammerstrom's

for the people
in the 17th Senate District

Hotline



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MARCH IS PARENTING AWARENESS MONTH As part of Parenting Awareness Month, the Michigan State Police (MSP) is seeking to educate parents about Internet predators and practicing Internet safety with their kids. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) issued a report in 2000 which gave startling statistics in regard to online victimization involving children. According to the report, 14 percent of children, ages 10 to 17, who use the Internet give out their e-mail address and 29 percent volunteer their home address if asked. The report also states that most children are willing to meet an Internet friend face-to-face without a parent's knowledge. MSP encourages parents to practice Internet safety at home by placing the home computer in a common area so that online activity can be observed and establishing rules for Internet use such as never giving out personal information including address or phone number. MSP urges anyone who is suspicious of online predators to contact their local authorities at once.

DID YOU KNOW? The United States Department of Justice estimates 77 million American children, ages 10 to 17, use the Internet.

AGENCY OFFERS ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL LIBRARIES The Michigan Center for the Book recently introduced a new grant program and a new online resource to help the state's libraries plan and implement programs to encourage reading. The new grant program includes partial funding for literary events or projects throughout Michigan that fulfill the state's goal of promoting an awareness of books, reading, literacy and authors. The events must be free and open to the public and the sponsoring organization must be a state-based nonprofit organization, library or school. Funds are limited and are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. The Michigan Center for the Book also launched the "Author Visits" website to help libraries plan a literary event, as well as offer links to publishers and author resources. The website also features a forum for librarians and other interested individuals to share information and collaborate with each other. For more information in regard to the grant program or the website, please contact the Michigan Center for the Book at (517) 373-3891.

NOTIFICATION OF STOLEN OR MISUSED PERSONAL INFORMATION Last month ChoicePoint, a national data aggregating company, announced that the personal information of 145,000 United States residents was stolen in October 2004. In response to this, the Michigan Senate introduced Senate Bill 309 which requires companies to notify Michigan residents when their personal, credit or medical information has been stolen or misused. Currently, California is the only state with a law that requires companies to notify affected individuals when their information is stolen or used for fraudulent purposes. Under the legislation, companies who fail to notify an affected individual would violate the Identity Theft Protection Act. Such violations carry a maximum of 30 days in prison and \$1,000 fine per violation.

POSSIBLE TAX CREDITS FOR DONATED LAND Both the state House and Senate introduced legislation providing tax credits to individuals who donate land for preservation. Senate Bill 317 and House Bill 4524 would allow taxpayers to claim up to 50 percent of the taxable value of a qualified property donation on their taxes. The Single Business Tax credit may not exceed \$100,000 a year. To qualify for the donation, the land must be donated to either the state of Michigan, a political subdivision of the state or a charitable organization, such as a land conservancy. SB 317 was referred to the Senate Committee on Finance, while HB 4524 awaits action in the House Committee on Tax Policy.

If you would like to receive future issues of Hammerstrom's Hotline via e-mail,
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